

BAY-DELTA PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE WATERSHED SUBCOMMITTEE

Meeting Summary

Meeting Date/Location: Friday, January 17, 2003
10:00 AM to 2:30 PM
Jones & Stokes
2600 V Street
Sacramento, CA

Meeting Attendees: See Attachment A

Meeting Handouts: See Attachment B

Welcome and Introductions

Robert Meacher, Watershed Subcommittee Co-chair, began the meeting with a welcome and round of introductions of all meeting participants (see Attachment A).

CALFED Watershed Program Updates

John Lowrie gave the Watershed Subcommittee a summary of recent Watershed Program developments.

- The **CALFED general services contract** has finally been signed and executed. The contract allows Jones & Stokes and their subconsultants, including Dennis Bowker, to provide services to CALFED programs. It is anticipated that Mr. Bowker will be working with the CALFED Watershed Program full-time in the near future.
- Regarding the CALFED Watershed Program budget, Mr. Lowrie explained that there is a current effort to take some of the General Fund monies allocated to the program and partially replace those funds with Prop 50 dollars. This will create only a slight effect on operations, but there may be some delays, such as the installment of stream gages in certain watersheds, and some science programs. The Governor released a draft of next year's budget (FY 2003-2004) last week. The outcome of the budget will affect the Watershed Program's work plan for next year.
- Mr. Lowrie reminded the meeting participants that legislation was signed in September of last year that establishes new governance for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. The CALFED Bay-Delta Program will now be governed by the California Bay-Delta Authority (Authority), an official state agency under the Resources

Agency effective January 1, 2003. The Authority will consist of a 20-seat board including representatives from 6 state agencies, 6 federal agencies, 7 public members, and one member of the BDPAC, along with 4 non-voting, ex-officio members of the state legislature. The Authority will be primarily responsible for Program oversight and coordination and implementation of the Science Program and CALFED Bay-Delta Program EIS/EIR Record of Decision. Implementation of individual program elements will be assigned to designated member agencies. Those agencies assigned to implement the Watershed Program in conjunction with Authority staff are:

- Resources Agency;
- State Water Resources Control Board;
- Department of Water Resources;
- Department of Fish and Game;
- Natural Resources Conservation Service;
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mr. Lowrie answered some questions from subcommittee members regarding the formation of this new agency:

At this time, the federal agencies on the Authority's Board are not authorized to participate in any decision-making; they are non-voting members until federal legislation is passed.

- The Watershed Program's Interagency Watershed Advisory Team (IWAT) may be elevated in importance to playing a role in implementation and coordination of the Watershed Program.
 - There is a chance that the Watershed Program will be able to add some regional watershed coordinators to the support staff, to be out there on the ground, showing how the Watershed Program connects with the other branches of Calfed, like Water Quality, Conveyance, etc.
 - The Watershed Program MOU will need to be rewritten to dictate how the implementing agencies will interact.
- We are finally seeing some significant progress as far as **funded projects** go. All of the projects funded in the first year of grants are now under contract (with only a couple of exceptions), and some are already reaching the 50% completion mark.
 - The Watershed Program's appeal to request **two new positions** was approved. This does not necessarily mean, however, that these positions will be created; as there are some additional decision-making processes that need to be completed first.

Planning for 2003

Mr. Lowrie posed a question regarding a **year #3 work plan** for the Watershed Program: Would the Subcommittee prefer the Watershed Program to use for this year's RFP just the Prop. 13 appropriations (the monies from which have several limitations – they are reserved for small, disadvantaged communities and for the most part must be used on capital outlay projects), or to include some of the Prop. 50 funds in this year's grants, which have no special requirements or limitations? The subcommittee then discussed some pros and cons of pushing to get Prop. 50 monies out through the next RFP.

Using Prop. 50 Funds in next RFP

Pros

- Since Prop 50 funds have no special requirements for their allocation, it would allow the Watershed Program to fund every type of project they would like to support, including planning and assessment projects.
- The state is now pushing to get all bond monies out into the economy; the shorter the delay in getting these funds out, the better.
- "Laying a claim" to the Prop. 50 monies this year may protect it from being diverted to other areas in these difficult economic times.
- Would maximize watersheds' opportunities to learn about what good watershed management actually is.

Cons

- In current form, the Prop. 50 monies are not grant-friendly; they only get one year to appropriate the monies, and one year to expend them. However, Mr. Lowrie is confident that this could timeframe could be extended, were the Watershed Program to decide to use these funds for the next RFP.
- It would require a high degree of cooperation with DWR, since they hold the Prop. 50 monies.
- There is some concern that another bond may not be passed for a while, given the state's economic situation. Some feel that the Prop. 50 funds should be stretched out over time as much as possible.

Mr. Lowrie then asked the subcommittee how they felt about giving the Department of Conservation \$9 million (\$3 million per year for three years) in order to help fund their **watershed coordinator program**. The program funds 50 full-time watershed coordinators per year, at a 75/25 match rate with the non-profit organization sponsoring each coordinator. This is a community capacity-building endeavor, and there is a clause built into the contract requiring each coordinator to find the money to be self-sufficient after three years. The subcommittee generally favored supporting the watershed coordinator program as it would have a direct positive effect on the Watershed Program in the form of the submission of more proposals. However, it was pointed out by a subcommittee member that there should be some weighted criteria in place to block the funding of too many "gold-plated" southern California projects.

The final topic for which Mr. Lowrie solicited input was the **2003 Subcommittee schedule**. Consensus was reached that the subcommittee should try to hold at least 4 road shows in 2003, particularly stressing the "crossover issues" with other CalFed programs, as well as continue to meet monthly, but revisit the frequency-of-meeting issue in June. Another idea for the subcommittee meetings was to try to have a presentation from a grant recipient at each meeting; it is a draw and it is interesting to see the Watershed Program monies at work.

Local Watershed Presentation

The Cosumnes River Task Force (CRTF) was funded by the Watershed Program during year #1, and Tina Lunt, a representative of the CRTF and Sloughhouse RCD, gave a special presentation on the status of their project, the Cosumnes River Watershed Inventory and Assessment. Ms.

Lunt explained that the Task Force was created after the 1997 floods in order to deal with Cosumnes River flood and watershed health issues. The project funded by the Watershed Program entails assessing watershed conditions and identifying resource problems. An inventory of existing resource data (land use, land cover, hydrology, soils, sediment, geology, water quality, biology and wildlife, unsurfaced roads, and cultural resources) and maps concerning the watershed has been completed. Along with their consultants, Jones & Stokes and Northwest Hydraulics, Inc., the CRTF is currently setting up a GIS system to map all of the collected data, as well as digitizing the results of a watershed erosion survey. Northwest Hydraulics is also conducting a review of historical geomorphology data, including historical river planform, levee locations, and channel incision and siltation. At this point in their assessment, erosion has been identified as one of the key resource issues in the Cosumnes watershed.

Interactive Discussion Regarding the California Watershed Management Strategic Plan

Renee Hoyos, of the State Resources Agency, presented their draft of the California Watershed Management Strategic Plan, the goal of which is to increase coordination between state agencies and local watershed organizations, to encourage agencies to conduct business in a watershed context, and to prevent duplicate efforts and gaps in coordination. Ms. Hoyos then opened the floor for discussion and comments. Some of the main comments included:

- The plan is agency-driven, which could be offensive because it is a typical government plan instead of a watershed management-based one. One suggestion was to re-title the document to indicate that it is an agency in-house document, not a “Statewide Strategic Plan”.
- Two of the Operating Principles are at odds with each other – one says that the State agencies will “communicate the State’s interests” while another says the agencies will “support and participate in collaborative efforts between State and local interests to develop innovative solutions”. Make it clear that the process itself is in transition with the changing culture in the agencies.
- The plan should be more collaborative and have a longer timeline.
- Incorporate federal agencies.
- Incorporate science and adaptive management.

Ms. Hoyos thanked the subcommittee for their input, and reminded the group that this will be a recurring agenda item until the Strategy is final.

Watershed Updates

- Robin Freeman informed the group that East Bay watersheds have been expressing lots of interest in the watershed assessment process, and that may be a source of several proposals in the 2003 RFP.
- Martha Davis’ agency, the Inland Empire Utilities Agency, has completed a stormwater management study, the final report for which will soon be posted on their website, www.ieua.org.

Attachment A

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Affiliation
Bertran-Ortiz, Nuria	North Bay Watershed Association and RMC, Inc.
Bowker, Dennis	CALFED Watershed Program
Brodie, John	San Joaquin County RCD
Brown, Syd	CDFA
Casey, Maureen	Southgate Rec & Park District
Cavanagh, Coral	CDM
Clark, E. Scott	USACE
Clayburgh, Joan	Sierra Nevada Alliance
Cornelius, James	Calaveras County Water District
Crooks, Bill	City of Sacramento
Davis, Martha	IEUA
Freeman, Robin	EJ Coalition for Water / Merritt College
Gallegos, Tony	Lake County Water Resources Division
Garver, Lyn	Kings River Conservation District
Gresham, Rich	Sacramento River Watershed
Haze, Steve	Millerton Area Watershed Coalition
Heiman, Dennis	CA RWQCB
Henly, Russ	CDF
Horney, Cindy	GCRCD
Howard, Vance	Yolo County Resource Conservation District
Hoyos, Renee	Resources Agency
Jerich (?), Frank	Amador RCD
Kiger, Luana (?)	NRCS
Knecht, Mary Lee	Jones & Stokes
Lavelle, Jane	City and County of San Francisco
Lorenzato, Stefan	DWR
Lowrie, John	CALFED Watershed Program
Lunt, Tina	SHRCD
Martin, Sara	Jones & Stokes
McGhee, Ken	CALFED
Meacher, Robert	BDPAC
Roberts, Ken	Yuba Conservancy
Rush, Andrew	CA Department of Conservation
Seits, Mark	TetraTech
Sime, Fraser	California Department of Water Resources
Smith, Lynda	MWD
Walsh Cady, Casey	California Department of Food and Agriculture
Ward, Kevin	ICE, UC Davis
Wermiel, Dan	CALFED

Attachment B

MEETING MATERIALS

- Meeting Agenda
- Cosumnes River Watershed Inventory and Assessment Handout (slides from Powerpoint presentation)
- California Watershed Management Strategic Plan Draft Mission, Vision, Operating Principles, Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Initiatives (dated December 6, 2002)